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7. OCCURRENCE OF THE BLACK TERN *CHLIDONIAS NIGER*  
(LINN.) IN INDIA

In 1950 Horace Alexander (*JBNHS* 49, pp. 120/121) published the first record of a Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* (Linn.) from India being one seen at Delhi. In subsequent literature (Ripley's SYNOPSIS 1961 and 1982, INDIAN HANDBOOK 1969 and 1981), this sighting has been considered the only record from our limits and as such to be treated with caution.

Accordingly, Humayun Abdulali in Checklist of the Birds of Delhi, Agra and Bharatpur (1978) marked it for Delhi only and was surprised to see it included in a list of birds of Bharatpur published by the Chief Wildlife Warden for Rajasthan at Jaipur, and now being sold at Bharatpur.

As the only possibility appeared to be its inclusion in the BNHS Bird ringing records for this area, these were examined but with no positive result. VCA however drew attention to correspondence wherein on 7th December 1970, P. B. Shekar, the Society's Field Assistant, telegraphed from Point Calimere,

Dist. Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, 10°18'N; 79°51' E, that a tern bearing Moscow ring marked Moskwa F-140.956 had been obtained. The U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences by their letter No. 3450 dated 19th January 1972 said it had been placed on a juvenile *Chlidonias niger* at Artek, Krasnovodkii, Turkmen S.S.R., 37.21 N, 53.56 E, on 18th July 1970, definitely establishing the occurrence of the species in India.

As no information is available in Indian literature regarding this species it may be mentioned that the bird had its wing measured as 221 mm. and weighed 72 gms. The weight is slightly over that noted in BIRDS OF THE SOVIET UNION (1969, Vol. 3:627), i.e. gms *contra* 52.8 to 67.8 gm.

This is an important record permitting acceptance of the earlier sight record and we are writing this note for it appears to have escaped attention and has remained unpublished.

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